

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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A.G. KAWAMURA, Secretary



TUBERCULOSIS TESTING IN CALIFORNIA

A Review for Accredited Veterinarians

Nearly two years after losing Accredited-Free status due to an outbreak of bovine tuberculosis among dairy herds in Kings and Tulare counties, California has regained that status, following publication of an interim rule in the Federal Register on April 15, 2005. As a result, the Federal requirements that cattle leaving California be tested for tuberculosis have been lifted. However, several states have testing requirements for cattle; always check with the state of destination when moving cattle out of California.

Following the detection of bovine tuberculosis, over 876,000 cattle from 688 herds were tested in California to make sure the disease had not spread further. New rules were also put in place requiring that dairy breeding cattle entering California be tested to prevent reintroduction of the disease - this rule remains in effect.

As accredited veterinarians, you play a critical role in preventing bovine tuberculosis from ever becoming re-established in California. Please follow these tuberculosis-testing guidelines:

1. Handling tuberculin

- Check the expiration date
- Store in a refrigerator
- Do not freeze, and avoid sunlight
- Do not draw up ahead of time
- Throw away unused portions – oxidizes quickly!

2. Identification

- Record the **official** identification of every animal tested - an official eartag or a registration tattoo

3. Injection

- Use a 1 ml. syringe with 26 g 3/8" needle
- Inject 0.1 ml. intradermally into the caudal fold – good injections produce a “bleb” - re-inject if you do not make a good intradermal bleb.
- If *you* inject, *you* read (remember which side)
- Do not vaccinate or treat cows on injection day
- There is no meat or milk withdrawal time for tuberculin

4. Reading the test

- Palpate every injection site you injected
- All animals injected must be read and recorded on official forms
- Read the test at 72 hours post injection \pm 6 hours
- **ANY swelling is a positive response** (check “suspect” box on form)
- **Report any responders immediately to the Animal Health Branch, and provide a copy of the test records**
- Expect a 1 - 5% false positive rate because of *M. avium* subsp *paratuberculosis*, *M. avium*, and other soil-borne Mycobacterium. Caudal fold response rates are being monitored.
- State/Federal veterinarians must apply the CCT test on any responders within 10 days of injection, or wait 60 days. Our commitment is to apply the CCT within 24 hours of notification.
- Mail white and green copies to Animal Health Branch district office in your area within five days of reading the test.

If you have any questions, please contact your local Animal Health Branch office: Redding District 530-225-2140; Modesto District 209-491-9350; Tulare District 559-685-3500; Ontario District 909-947-4462.

We appreciate your continuing efforts to ensure that California remains free of bovine tuberculosis.